

January 15, 2020

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF DOUGLAS ANDERSON, DISTRICT 13, IN OPPOSITION TO HB 4**

I've lived in the district of this bill's primary sponsor, **Delegate Atterbeary** for over 30 years. My family and I live in the residence that I've owned in District 13 for 25 years. My wife is a gun owner. I am a gun owner. My son is 10 years old, and he knows how to handle a rifle and handgun under our supervision. We are a law-abiding family.

I have conducted private-party long gun transfers in the past in this state. Countless law-abiding Maryland citizens have. We have managed to do so without the state's assistance for hundreds of years – even before this country was founded. This bill makes it more difficult in the State of Maryland to know what's legal to do with your rifle or shotgun than for a handgun! *I appear today in opposition to HB 4.*

Last year during House Judiciary testimony, **Delegate Conaway** asked a question to the panel in response to testimony on a bill proposing stronger criminal sentencing. I believe he inquired about reading grade-level of the average person in Baltimore. I appreciated his question and his intent behind it. A citizen needs to be able to understand the laws that apply to them, and that same citizen also needs to be able to understand the consequences should they violate those laws. With HB4, a steep learning curve awaits any reader. Potholes and trap doors litter this bill, each one increasing the potential for criminal exposure to the law-abiding Marylander.

The Maryland General Assembly seems to ignore the required reading grade-level when it comes to gun bills. Why is that? Hundreds of thousands of rifle and shotgun owners in this state (population 6.05 million as of 2017) who are going about their daily lives in lawful ways will be placed at risk by HB 4. They risk losing everything by simply owning a rifle or a shotgun in Maryland. Why should they be subject to laws with complex language that, should they poorly comprehend and navigate, leaves them subject to HEAVY criminal penalties (steeper by far than those for theft of a firearm) AND then be subject to state and federal restrictions on their firearm ownership?

This bill is completely uncalled for. It is a problem in search of a non-existent problem. The only thing it would do is create a new class of criminal in our great state. That class would be known as "the formerly law-abiding gun owners". Sending this bill out of committee with a favorable report will destroy families and lives of the law-abiding. I sincerely urge you to give an UNFAVORABLE report on HB 4,

Douglas L. Anderson

District 13